

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (canceled).
2. (currently amended): An aircraft of the airplane or glider type The method according to claim 4~~7~~, characterized in that further comprising the step of providing said propulsion means (2) ~~comprise as~~ at least one plasma thruster which operates using plasma created from the surrounding air at said high altitude.
3. (currently amended): An aircraft of the airplane or glider type The method according to claim 4~~7~~, characterized in that it includes further comprising the step of providing said aircraft with at least one solar generator (5) cooled by convection with the surrounding air at said high altitude.
4. (currently amended): An aircraft of the airplane or glider type The method according to any claim 4~~7~~, characterized in that it includes further comprising the step of providing said aircraft with at least one storage battery (7) having superconductive components.
5. (currently amended): A method of getting an aircraft of the airplane or glider type as specified in claim 1 onto station, the method being characterized by The method according to claim 7, further comprising the following steps:
 - on the ground, securing said aircraft (1) ~~is secured~~ to an independent transporter (3);

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/009,573

- causing said transporter (3) ~~takes to take~~ said aircraft (1) to ~~a~~ the high altitude at which it is to ~~operate~~ operate, making use solely of said propulsion means ~~of said transporter~~ (3);

- causing said transporter (3) ~~releases to release~~ said aircraft (1) at the altitude (H) and at least approximately at the intended location of its operating station; and

- if necessary, causing said aircraft (1) ~~uses its own to use~~ said propulsion means (2) to put ~~itself~~ said aircraft finally on station and to take up its proper orientation.

6. (currently amended): ~~A~~ The method according to claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising the step of providing said transporter (3) ~~comprises with~~ at least one balloon (3) suitable for rising to the high altitude.

7. (currently amended): A method of replacing a radio relay in a telecommunications network comprising a plurality of radio relays, the method ~~being characterized in that~~ comprising the steps of:

~~replacing~~ said radio relay (10) ~~is replaced by~~ an aircraft (1) of the airplane or glider type as ~~specified in claim 1, and provided~~ which has propulsion means (2) enabling said aircraft (1) to maintain itself, to move itself, and to orient itself solely at high altitude;

providing said aircraft with transceiver means (15) for radio waves (16, 17), (16, 17); and taking said aircraft (1) ~~being taken~~ to an altitude and a position such that said transceiver means (15) lies in the same ~~direction~~ direction, relative to at least one user (11, 12) of said telecommunications network (RT)-(RT), as said replaced relay (10), with operation between said transceiver means (15) and said user (11, 12) being performed via an existing interface, thereby avoiding the need to modify the pointing of an antenna of said user.

8. (canceled).